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The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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A YEAR IN HEAVEN.

One year among the angels, beloved, thou
hast been;
One year has Heaven's white portal shut back
the sound of sin;
And yet no voice, no whisper, comes floating
down from thee,
To tell us what glad wonder a year in heaven
may be.

Our hearts before it listen—the beautiful
closed gate:
The silence yearns around us, we listen and
we wait;
It is thy heavenly birthday, on earth thy
lilies bloom;
In thine immortal garland canst find for these
no room?

Thou lovedst all things lovely when walking
with us here;
Now, from the heights of heaven seems earth
no longer dear?
We cannot paint thee moving in white robed
state afar,
Nor dream our flower of comfort a cool and
distant star.

Heaven is but life made richer; therein can
be no loss;
To meet our love and longing, thou hast no
gulf to cross;
No adamant between us uprears its rocky
screen;
A *veil* before us only—thou in the light serene.

That veil 'twixt earth and heaven a breath
might waft aside;
We breathe one air, beloved, we follow one
dear Guide;
Passed into open vision, out of our mist and
rain,
Thou seest how sorrow blossoms, how peace is
won from pain.

Because we know thee near us, and nearer
still to Him
Who fills thy cup of being with glory to the
brim,
We will not stain with grieving our fair
though fainter light,
But cling to thee in spirit as if thou wert in
sight.

A year of tears to us; to thee,
The end of thy probation's strife,
The archway to eternity,
The portal of immortal life;
To us the pall, the bier, the sod;
To thee the palm of victory given—
Enough, my heart! thank God! thank God!
That thou hast been a year in heaven.
—*Selected.*

THE TEN VIRGINS.

"And five of them were foolish, and five were wise."—MATT. XXV. 2.

The Sunday-school and the Bible classes have come to this parable in the work of the winter.

The story always challenges the interest of everybody,—of children and their elders. Preparation for duty, preparation for life, is the lesson or the suggestion. And, when one says "preparation," he uses a large word—with a long future, if it be of man, an infinite being, of whom he is talking.

Even on the animal side man has to prepare his food, for to-morrow, perhaps, or in harvest time for winter, as the beavers do, or the ants were once said to do. Let us read

the natural history. Our pretty ground squirrel is so far a socialist that three or four occupy one house. Eight or ten feet from the hole we see one run into is a chamber lined with leaves where they sleep. In several side galleries are stored the wheats, buckwheat, hazel nuts, acorns, Indian corn, grass seeds, walnuts, or chestnuts which they have provided. They continue to add to their supplies till forced into their houses by the inclemency of the weather. Often their stores are much beyond the necessities of the winter.

In reading this description, we seem to read of some men and women whom we have known. For there seem to be men whom we might call ground squirrels who are satisfied with their supplies of food or personal comfort, and who in their preparation for the future provide for these, and these only. Such men are described in the other parable of preparation, where the successful landholder pulled down his barns that he might store more grain. Then he said, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; eat, drink, and be merry." That story, in the intense brevity of the gospel language, describes the position perfectly. "Eat, drink, and be merry." That is all that such an investor gains for his interest on his life endowment, if his preparations have been limited to the laying up of goods or *things*. "These things which thou hast provided." Such is the scornful language of the parable. Many a millionaire has learned this too late—like the virgins. Their wedding dresses were all right; they had flowers for the bride and confectionery for the bridegroom—things enough, but no light; there light was the essential quality. So this successful barnbuilder had *things* enough, but he needed more than *things*.

Accordingly, you find, even in popular language, that the world's interest and its approval are given to wise men, not to mere accumulators, and that the world's definition of wisdom means foresight. And good wisdom means more than this poor care for *things;* real wisdom requires a knowledge of the unseen laws and principles which determine even the existence of things. Take that case of the coffee merchant of whom I spoke last Sunday. For real success in his business he needs more than a knowledge of the places of the present stocks of coffee and their prices. He needs more than the fact of how much coffee or how little has been raised in the last twelvemonth. He has to look forward many years to the conditions of politics, of climate, and of other probabilities, from which he has to learn what the harvest of 1896 will be, that of '97, and that of '98. He must be a man of foresight, of principles, as well as a man of knowledge of things.

I have known but few distinguished men intimately. Among them was one great man of affairs, one of the leaders of the community in which he lived. I loved him first, and it was not till afterwards that I studied his success. When I studied it, I saw this, that he lived in the future, no prophet or no poet more so. I am disposed to think that his great success as a man of affairs depended on this far fore-look, not simply into the years of this century, not simply into the next century or the next, but into the infinite future of the good God. He believed implicitly that God's kingdom was to come and he looked forward with much more interest than he looked around him on the little affairs of to-day.

I observed this first in what you would call little affairs: that his seats in a Pullman were engaged a fortnight in advance, that his box at the theatre was ready for him when everybody else was disappointed at the failure of orders. But I found, as I knew him better, that this was simply as of habit. He was seeing the future world, the world as the world is to be. He knew the laws of its advance, stating and rating those laws (let me say in passing) with very certain faith in the empire of God.

It is not that these who are around me need me: I need them. God has legions of angels by whom he can take care of them; and I may shut myself up, if I choose, in my closet as the young prince in "The Arabian Nights" was locked up, in the fear that somebody might hurt him. But I need them. I am no son of God, you are no daughter of God, unless you and I go about the Father's business. And the Father's business means that you and I bring the Kingdom of God into the world. We cannot do that when we are shut up in underground closets, like the young prince, not though they be lighted with incandescent lights, not though the greenhouse take care of itself and give us the choicest flowers, not though invisible hands spread the daily feasts before us. We do not really live, and thus there is no preparation, until and unless we bear our brother's burdens. That is to say, there is no large life, least of all is there any infinite life, where I am satisfied with trimming my own lamp, with buying my own burning fluid, and with filling up from hour to hour, that I by myself may stagger in alone at whatever festival. True preparation, true providence, is not for things, not for meat and drink, not for music and dancing at this feast or that feast. True

preparation, true providence, is for life; and there is no life which deserves the name unless it is the common life of one who gives and takes, helps and is helped, in the movement, not of his own two feet, but of the world in which it has pleased his Father that he should be born.

So Wordsworth describes his ideal hero,—

"Who in the great conflict keeps the law,
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw."

And Jane Eyre, in her hardest struggle, uses the preparation she had made when there was no gale, no lightning or thunder. "Laws and principles are not for times when there is no temptation! They are for moments like this: when my veins run fire, and my heart beats faster than I can count its throbs. Immutable they have been, immutable they shall be." Thus is it that man prepares himself for whatever contingency,—to run with the footmen, to carry burdens with the porters, to ride with horsemen. Let your lamps be trimmed and burning. Let your vessels be full. Then your Lord will come at the moment when you least think that he is coming.

But I shall win no great victory unless I am used to little victories. I shall not be serene before Cæsar when I come to be tried at Rome, if I have been cross with my travelling companions, with Titus here and Silas and Timothy, and the servant who brings my breakfast. That is a fine phrase in the Epistle to the Hebrews,—that the full-grown man is he who by reason of use has his senses exercised to discern good and evil. It is to be noticed that it comes in close connection with the statement that the Saviour himself learned obedience by the things that he suffered. It is very easy for you and me to hope for fortunate circumstances,—that we shall travel in Switzerland, that we shall see the pictures in the Pitti, that we shall talk with Gladstone or stand at the cataract of the Nile. But all this will be gall and wormwood if we have not prepared ourselves for the adventure or the interview,—if we have no knowledge of the artists' subjects, if we have nothing to say to Gladstone. Our preparation is not to be simply the study of the route. It is to be the preparation of the traveller.

Now for this foresight which the foolish virgins lacked, and of this tenderness where even the wise virgins fall short, we must go behind accomplishments, behind books, behind oil-jugs, behind any things. I am God's child. It is he who has made me. It is his life I need,—"Nearer, my God, to Thee." Here is the light which you and I are to pray for. For it is light which comes to those who seek it, and to them alone. If in the little trial, as my foolish neighbor calls it, I bring divine power to bear, the God within me, and no less machinery, in that victory over temptation, I shall gain light and strength; yes, I shall gain the habit of victory. The friend whom I cited when I began said once in a crisis, "I am not in the habit of working for plans which fail." I am not in the habit of shutting my eyes when there is anything to see. I am not in the habit of wavering in expression when there is anything to say. I am not in the habit of feeling in the dark, if by striking a light and setting my lamp a-flame I can join the Master's company.

God is very kind. In this matter he is with me and means to help me through. "Thou hast been faithful in few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." Yes, if I have been faithful in few. "If ye seek me, surely ye shall find me, if ye seek for me with all your hearts." Yes, if we seek for him with all our hearts. "He that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. But he that soweth to the Spirit shall reap eternal life."

The preparation is not of things, it is of the new-born angel of God who is to use the things. Of his body, yes—that it may do God's errands. Of his mind, yes—that it may work out God's plans. Of the immortal soul, that the soul may grow in grace, may have light in all emergency, may enter into the joy of the Lord.—*Edward Everett Hale.*

THE STILL HOUR.

SHORT PRAYERS.

May we be full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

May we follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

Being led by thy Spirit, may we become thy children.

May nothing separate us from the love of Christ.

In all things may we be more than conquerors, through him who has loved us.

"FOR I SHALL YET PRAISE HIM."

Sad Soul! doth fear confound thee?
Soul! dost thou faint and fail?
Do angry waves surround thee?
Do stormy winds assail?
These waves thou shalt walk over,
This storm thou shalt forget;
Still clasp the Heavenly Lover,
And thou shalt praise him yet.

Doth the deep darkness thicken?
Do the hot tears down roll?
Take comfort, heart sore-stricken!
Rise, heavy-laden soul!
The stroke will leave no sadness,
The burden no regret;
The gloom will end in gladness,
And I shall praise Him yet.

Lord! do I seem forsaken?
Lord! do I miss Thy smile?
Dimness these eyes hath taken;
Thou shinest all the while.
Though earth-born mists may veil Thee,
Sweet Sun, Thou hast not set:
Again these eyes shall hail Thee,
And I shall praise Thee yet.

With thee I oft have talkèd
In gladsome prayer and song;
With Thee I oft have walkèd
The shining way along.
Again will come the glory:
Again the way will shine:
Joy yet will crown my story;
My song shall yet be Thine.

We thank thee, in our perplexities, O God, that there is no perplexity with thee. O thou that seest the end from the beginning and in love hast made all souls whom thou hast made, into thy hands we would commit our uncertain way, that by thy guidance all our going may be made sure. Since perfect vision is beyond our reach, give us the faith and peace of the childlike heart. Forgive us our distrusts and all the sins and follies which have made darkness in our souls, and shed abroad thy light for revelation and for joy. O thou, unchangeable in love, delighting in mercy, bringing good to pass where evil seemed to triumph, let us never despair or give back in the conflict; but bring victory, we beseech thee, that it may be the foretaste of thy kingdom and that open vision thou keepest for the pure in heart. In the name of Christ, Amen.

—*The Congregationalist.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.*]

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

OFFERS.

Miss J. W. Kennedy, 634 Canton Avenue, Milton, Mass., offers *Scribner's*, 1911; *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1910; *Youth's Companion*, 1912; *Atlantic*, 1913 and back numbers; *Century*, 1912.

Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass., offers current numbers of the *Outlook* and back numbers for the last few weeks.

Books offered by Cambridge Cheerful Letter Committee. Address Miss Helen L. Bayley, 399 Broadway, Cambridge, Mass.: "Addresses," Henry Drummond; "Napoleon," Lenz; "The Optimistic Life," Marden; "Blessed be Drudgery," Gannett; "Literary Hearthstones of Dixie," Picket; "Hunting in the Jungle," Kellogg; "The Heroine in Bronze," Allen; "Kilmeny of the Orchard," Montgomery; "Helen with the High Hand," Bennett; "Perpetua," Calthorp; "A Daughter of Fife," Barr; "The Top of the Morning," Tompkins; "Hard Times," "Barnaby Rudge," Dickens; "Wonder-book," Hawthorne.

REQUESTS.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. I have the primary work in our school here. I wish some one would send me stencils of any kind, also pictures and anything suitable for rewards of merit for little ones. I have fifty pupils, and they strive so hard for little gifts; but, where one has so many to buy, it amounts to right much at the end. Mrs. W. M. Peele, Anlander, North Carolina.

2. We owe so much to the Cheerful Letter friends that I cannot find words to express my gratitude. You remember, dear Mrs. Nichols, that I have been in touch with you for eighteen years. We have been teaching, teaching, teaching, here in Oklahoma all these long years, and often, when we have been "put to it" for some needful book, I

have gone to the *Cheerful Letter* and nearly always have been helped. I know a young boy, a bright fellow, who is working on an address on temperance and needs books or anything that would help on the subject. Mrs. T. J. Philpin, Muskogee, Oklahoma.

3. Here I come again to thank the kind friends for the good reading they have sent me. I would like to have a dictionary. I would like so much to have letters from far-away friends. I would like to be remembered on my birthday, February 22. Mrs. M. J. Hall, R. F. D. Box 45, Sandy Ridge, North Carolina.

4. I have been married nearly a year and in a new neighborhood, and hope you will send me some reading to help pass the lonely hours. My husband and I live with his aged mother in a lonely place and thinly settled neighborhood. I ask especially for the *Delineator*, *Cheerful Letter*, and *Ladies' Home Journal*, but any good reading will be appreciated. Mrs. G. Lee Roberson, Elamsville, Patrick County, Virginia.

5. Mrs. De Witt Clay, Pedlar Mills, Virginia, will be glad of *McClure's* or some story paper.

6. Will some one send me copies of *Youth's Companion* from July, 1913, to December, and continue to pass on through 1914? Also *Ladies' Home Journal* for 1913–14. Thanking whoever may send, Mrs. A. J. McQueen, Rowland, North Carolina.

7. Mrs. Isabelle Bailey, Rose, Kansas, R. F. D. 2, is grateful for what has been sent her in the past, and asks for any of Winston Churchill's books or any magazine.

8. For a good many months I have not asked for any books, but, now that I am in the country and much alone, I would be glad of some. Would like to receive the "Trail of the Lonesome Pine" and the "Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come," by Fox, for my son who has been very ill with heart trouble. For myself I wish "The Grand Duke" and "Actions and Reactions," or any of Kipling's later works, and anything suitable for a girl of twelve. Mrs. Louise H. Goodwin, Route Box 50, Sandidges, Virginia.

9. I wish to thank you for the many nice things you sent for our Christmas tree. We all had such a nice time, and I am sure you would have been so glad could you have seen how much everything was appreciated; and I hope you will pardon me for not writing to every one personally. I moved to a new place two days ago and am so very busy getting straight again. I just moved two miles, so I am in my same neighborhood. We have moved right in the woods, so there will be so much to do. I have been out all afternoon helping to burn stumps and pick up trash. The work is hard, but I enjoy being out of doors. Hoping that you may all have a happy and prosperous year, and please do not forget to send us any good reading which will be appreciated. Would like to receive the *Delineator* or *Pictorial Review* for the coming year, or any good fashion magazine. May God bless you all. Mrs. J. Porter, Doerun, Colquitt County, R. F. D. No. 3, Georgia.

10. Mrs. J. R. Thomas, Cuervo, New Mexico, asks for any magazines.

11. I am very fond of reading and will be grateful for any good reading. I am a farmer's wife living on rented land. I have one little boy age two years. I hope some one will send me the *Cheerful Letter* and some good story papers. I send as reference Rev. D. J. Bryant, Route 1, Floyd. Mrs. Mollie Lancaster, Route 2, Pizarro, Virginia.

12. Mrs. Sarah Hopkins, Hemmingford, Nebraska, will be glad to receive *Scribner's* for 1913.

13. Rev. J. N. R. Miller, Englewood, Tennessee, R. I. Box 413, will be grateful for reading.

14. Miss M. Allen, Ferozepore, Punjab, India, is grateful for the two copies of "Black Beauty" which she placed in two different school libraries there, and now asks for copies of Boy Scout papers, also *World's Work* and *Dumb Animals*.

15. Mrs. Fannie Tarltan, Wingate, Route 2, North Carolina, will be very thankful for reading for herself and husband, and pictures for the two-year-old baby.

16. Mrs. Edith Reynolds, 310 Wheeler Street, Three Rivers, Michigan, will be glad of little story-books for her children.

17. Susie Thompson, Dellvale, Route 1, Box 22, Kansas, asks for a story-book, and music books for beginners.

18. Miss Helen Lyon, Tarboro, North Carolina, asks for an "Ancient History of the World," "Last Days of Pompeii," "Shepherd of the Hills," and any of Walter Scott's stories. ("Ivanhoe" has been sent.)

19. Mrs. Annie Woody, Dodson, Virginia, having recently moved into the country far from church and school, asks for reading. She has three children old enough for school, but the distance is too great for them to attend.

20. Mrs. O. R. DeMoss, Jerome, Idaho, Route 1, asks for stories and recitations for her little girl and a novel for herself.

21. Mrs. William Halstead, Ainsworth, Nebraska, will be very thankful to receive any one of the following books: "Freckles," "Girl of the Limberlost," "Ishmael," "Self-made," "Abraham Lincoln, Boy and Man," "The Doctor," "The Call of Dan Matthews," "The Knight of Cumberland," "Gordon Keith."

22. Reward cards would be of great help in my work among the small children,—just picture cards of any kind. Would like some papers or anything pertaining to primary or kindergarten work. It is an interesting and needful work, but needs so many requisites. None were here when I came, four months ago. Miss Mary W. Brown, Kelford, North Carolina.

23. Miss Irene Meader, Alto, Virginia, a sister of Miss Emma Meader, now deceased, is having her first experience teaching, and hopes we will not forget her as she needs our help.

24. Mr. Nathan T. Hale, Lester, Letcher County, Kentucky, asks for books to form a library. He has the recommendation of Rev. Archelaus Lucas, and gives the name of the postmaster, who will act as librarian.

25. Mrs. Sarah Gilbert, Fullerton, Nebraska, asks for the book, "John Barleycorn."

26. Mrs. A. C. Hottinger, Hebron, Ohio, a helpless invalid confined to her bed, and a great sufferer, asks to be remembered on her birthday, April 4, with books, good reading, cards, or just anything to help her pass her time as she gets so lonely, and her mail is her only comfort.

27. I thank all who have sent me reading matter; and, as I am just getting over a serious operation and cannot get out very much, I would be so grateful for anything to read to help pass the hours away. I would be especially glad of *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Modern Priscilla*, or any good poultry or farm paper. Mrs. Bessie McFarland, Manchester, North Carolina.

28. For years I have received *Munsey's Magazine* and *Cheerful Letter* from Miss L. H. Bailey and *The Christian Register* from Mrs. C. A. Hobbs, all of which were greatly appreciated. Every time I was able to write, I tried to thank them for their Christian kindness. Often I have longed for some of the reading offered, but felt a delicacy in asking. I now presume to ask for several at once, as it is painful for me to write, my fingers being stiff and drawn outward. Have not walked since 1907, so I cannot do a thing but try to write and read when able to sit up. I'll be thankful for *Chalkley's Journal* (old publication) (will return it if desired), *People's Home Journal*, and *Youth's Companion*, current numbers, after being read, and a copy of Webster's Blue Back Speller, also "Sesame and Lilies." Address Mrs. Maggie A. Reese, Route 2, Winfield, Alabama.

29. I am a young girl fifteen years of age living in the country, and reading matter is very scarce with us. I would be so glad and thankful for magazines of any kind or any good book; and my little sister (six years old), Agnes McFarland, would be glad of any child's paper or picture-books. I refer you to our pastor, Rev. R. A. McLeod, Rockfish, North Carolina. Thanking you in advance for anything you can send, Kate McFarland, Manchester, North Carolina. (*The Beacon* is being sent to Agnes McFarland.)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Mrs. J. A. Tyner is now at Canon City, Colorado, R. R. 2, Box 17.

Mrs. Leslie Cumming's address is now Auburn, Maine, Route 2.

Mrs. Ada M. Hunter is now Oil City, Oklahoma.

Lester Bowman from Petra to Granite Falls, North Carolina, R. 5.

Mrs. Nellie Craig from Spray to Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, R. F. D. 1.

Mrs. Hattie Foster from Monument, New Mexico, to Post City, Texas.

N. J. Purden is now Cochran, Virginia.

DEATH.

Miss Belle Williamson, whose letter appeared in our September number, writes us that her father died October 19, 1913.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

HUMANE EDUCATION—A FIRST STEP.

"W. B.," in *Our Dumb Animals* for July, 1909, writes in very general terms of the need of humane education—of its beginning in the family. I should like to detail a specific instance of such education with its very broad results.

Here in this family of mine are four small boys, little savages each of them, as full of life and curiosity as red squirrels, fuller, indeed, of curiosity and interest in every sort of living creature—as is every normal boy who has a chance to be. I have watched this interest narrowly for the supposed natural cruelty of the natural child, but have not found a trace. They do not differ from other children: they simply have this advantage over some; namely, that they themselves live as natural animals in a natural world, and the life of things, as it moves and behaves, is so entirely interesting that they never thought of killing or torturing for the sake of abnormal behavior that follows pain. With this interest to begin with (which, I believe, is natural to all children), their specific education in ways humane became simply the quickening and extending of the knowledge and curiosity they already had.

As they lived in the fields, they naturally kept doing this for themselves; but something more, something larger, was necessary, —their knowledge needed to be organized, related, their interest directed.

First, some of the modern animal stories were read to them; but it was too often the story, rather than the animal, that held their interest, and, besides, most of the stories were either so goody-good or so viciously untrue as to be morally harmful. Then Arabella Buckley's "Life and Her Children," and "Winners in Life's Race," were begun, and the boys carried carefully through these accurate and delightful volumes with this result: they got a view of life from the amœba to elephant, of the orders and families of animals, their habits, characteristics, relationships, and distribution, and the parts they have played in the making of the world.

Here was something more than a pretty-kitty story or a super-fox story or a sermon on how cruel it is to throw stones at anything in general. Here was genuine science, fascinatingly, simply told, that gave these children a knowledge of life as a whole, and an interest in life for it own sake,—sound, true, wholesome, moral knowledge and interest.

After this it was inevitable that the small lives and the large lives about them—the caddis in the brook, the fox in the woods—should have for them equal value and equal interest, for a caddis fly in "Life and Her Children," was just as worth while as the elephant in "Winners in Life's Race." So, also, in the actual world of their open fields and woods.

With this sort of an introduction to life, a rusty tomato can full of leaf mould and a snail is just as good to watch as a cage full of polar bears. I have seen it over and over. All life has become interesting, and interesting as it lives and behaves naturally. There is no desire to kill, no desire to watch the abnormal behavior that follows pain.

There is nothing—neither sermon or story —that will take the place of the simple truth about things—the whole scientific truth. It is amazing how little *chicken-licken* literature the child needs, and how much scientific truth he can take in and grow on.—*Dallas Lore Sharp, in Our Dumb Animals.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

MARCH SUNSHINE.

The March sun sets the world afire. In the open pastures where it is caught as in the hollow of a reflector I see the waves of heat quivering up from the short brown grass. The west wind may blow keen if it will. It may hold the ground firm in the adamantine bonds of the frost and bid the ice and snow stand in the shade of northerly facing hillsides. I have but to pass to the southward of these to find in open pastures a glow of sun that bids me quiver with delight as do the trembling strata of air above the grass. Through the tremulous light of this incandescence I see a burning bush in every clump of brier tangle. Here are stab of red flames, clear glow of embers, a brilliant warp shot through a woof of smoke. To go nearer is not to altogether lose the illusion, though I may touch its components without being scorched. The twigs of the dwarf wild rose are themselves the red flame, so rich are they in the heart glow that seems to leap to meet the sun. Scattered among them in the same clump sleep the embers, dead stems of the tall goldenrod that have no inner fire of their own, but reflect it from the gloss of their pale-yellow, rain-washed stems. The bayberry stubs, gnarled and crooked, are the swirling gray smoke which holds brown shadows blotched in with conical seed-pod masses of last year's hardhack.

There come days in March when the light of the sky seems to be shattered into its component rainbow hues when it touches the earth. For weeks, perhaps, the air has

drifted down upon us from the Far North-west, all its moisture frozen out of it. It is so keen that it will hold the mercury below freezing point in all shadows, yet so dry that all the world may sit in the sun and feel the thrill of June in its caress. To open the eyes is to see a world of color that June can never show. Then the earth will be drowned in green. Now the north-west wind has left so little moisture in the air that all edges and outlines are hard and clear cut, and the light, shattered upon these, breaks into prismatic hues that distance tones down into a coloring of exquisite beauty. The distant hills are violet on their sunny rims, indigo in their deep shadows, blue in their half-tones. Every near woodland has its greens, golden green in the limbs of willows; clear, translucent green in thickets of cat-brier and in the young twigs of swamp blueberry bushes. Young grass in newly sown fields of last fall, caught by the winter in the bravery of its first lusty growth, is green, too, but that is the least common of the rainbow colors under the clear March sky. Everywhere in the pastures underfoot are the yellows, in dead fog of last year's wild grasses, shading into orange in the Indian wood grass and on into red in twigs of viburnum and wild rose.

It is only the clear, dry air of a north-west wind under a March sun that gives us this wonder of rainbow tint on all things. Let snow flurries obscure the sky or a chill south wind fill the air with its moisture, and the brilliancy passes. Wrapped in a fawn-colored mantle, the earth withdraws its prismatic joy and waits for the magic fingers of the sun to loose the delight of expectation once more.

For all the delight of the woodland world is in happiness to come rather than in happiness here. The pearls the willows wear are promise, not fulfilment; buds, not bloom. The stamens are deep beneath the fur: pushed by the power of sap below, they swell and unfold, yet do not yet dare burst their wrappings. It will take the coax of a south rain, and perhaps of another, as well as the warmth of midday March sun and the fires it sets, to bring them forth. A week, a day even, may see it, and all the world seems tiptoe with expectation of it. For with the full bloom of the willows the bees will swarm forth and fill the warmth along the water courses with the drowsy monotone of their delight. The bees blow the bass notes on the bagpipes of spring, droning out the tonic, or at most the subdominant also, a firm foundation above which dance all the bird melodies of the day.

To-day, perhaps, surely to-morrow we say, three sweet songsters of the coming season should be with us. As I go down the brook to see how much more white of willow catkins shows to-day than did yesterday, how many more alder tassels have cracked the rich brown of their winter glaze to let the dawning yellow of pollen peep through, I expect at any moment to hear the rich, gurgling "konqueree" of the male redwing blackbirds, jovial voices dancing jigs down the sky to me as the flock flies over. At any moment I expect to see scintillant blue of the sky concentrate and soften and flutter by on wings, singing the bluebird's greeting of "cheerily we, cheerily we." The redwing is full of dancing cheer, the bluebird of gentle sweetness. The third of the trio, the robin, is the solid burgess of pasture society. His ample terra-cotta breast seems puffed with civic pride when he first comes bouncing along the open field, his bright eye glancing this way and that in patronizing approval of all things mundane. He is the very mayor of Pasture-town, and any morning now we may find him perched high where all may see, warbling "Sweet Adeline" to an admiring world.—*Winthrop Packard.*

BIOGRAPHY.

ULFILAS, THE FIRST TRANSLATOR OF THE SCRIPTURES INTO A MODERN LANGUAGE.

A gentleman has sent us an article by the late learned Rev. John Kenrick of York, supplementary of what we gave last week on Ulfilas. It is very interesting, taken in connection with the more elaborate record of Ulfilas. We give a few extracts from Mr. Kenrick's article:—

If Gawaine Douglas had reason to be—

"More pleased that in a barbarous age
He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page,
Than that beneath his sway he held
The bishopric of fair Dunkeld,"

honor surely is due to Ulfilas, who gave to a people much more barbarous two gifts of infinitely greater value, a vernacular version of the word of God, and at the same time the use of an alphabet.

The origin of the Gothic nation, which performed such an important part in the destruction of the old, and the constitution of the new, political system of Europe, is somewhat obscure. It is sufficient for our present purpose to take them up in the year A.D. 258, when in the distracted times of Valerian and Gallienus they ravaged Cappadocia and Galatia, and carried off thence a number of

Christians, among whom were several of the clergy, who exerted themselves zealously and successfully for the propagation of the Christian faith. They healed diseases, and by acts of beneficence and a holy life they gained many converts. Among the Christians thus carried off were the ancestors of our Ulfilas, who are said to have lived near the foot of the Cappadocian mountain Parnassus.* Arianism was not yet in existence, having its origin in the fourth century; nor is it known from what cause it spread so widely and so soon after its birth among the Gothic tribes. It is certain, however, that not only the Visigoths, but also their kinsmen, the Vandals and Langobardi, held firmly to this form of Christian belief.

The family of Ulfilas had been settled for sixty years among the Goths when he was born in the year A.D. 318. His name is evidently Gothic, and therefore it is natural to suppose that they had in the mean time intermarried with the Goths, and were ranked with that nation. But it is probable that the knowledge of Greek letters and civilization, which the captives had brought with them, had not perished, and thus Ulfilas, by his double consanguinity, became a fit instrument in the hands of Providence for the work which he accomplished. Of his life till he reached the age of thirty little is known. The Goths were established on the borders of the Greek empire, and had frequent relations, sometimes friendly, sometimes hostile, with Constantinople during the reign of Constantine and Constantius. It appears to have been in A.D. 348, when Constantius occupied the Byzantine throne, that Ulfilas visited Constantinople as an ambassador from his nation. He had hitherto been simply a reader in the church, but on this occasion he was ordained a bishop. Philostorgius, whose work has been abridged by Photius, says that Eusebius was one of those by whom he was ordained; but, as Eusebius died in 342, there must be a chronological error in the date of his consecration, or in the statement that Eusebius took a part in it. One thing is certain, that it was at the hands of Arian bishops that he received his episcopate.

Ulfilas and a part of the nation appear to have established themselves on the south side of the Danube in A.D. 355; Nicopolis, near the foot of Mount Hæmus, was the place of his residence. We have means of knowing what were the theological opinions of Ulfilas himself. Waitz has published a fragment of a MS., preserved in the Royal (National-Imperial?) Library of Paris, containing the remarks of a Bishop Maximinus on the speeches of other bishops at the Council of Aquileia, held in A.D. 381. The object of the commentator is to controvert what was said by the Catholic bishops in that council and to confirm what was said by the Arians, especially by Palladius, bishop of Ratiara on the Danube, not far from Widdin, the region which, along with Mysia, where Ulfilas lived and taught, was now the chief home of Arianism. These remarks embody an extract from a letter of Auxentius, the Arian bishop of Silistria, in which he gives an account—unfortunately an imperfect one—of the life, teaching, and creed of Ulfilas, and of a mission which he undertook to Constantinople, apparently in the hope of inducing the Emperor Theodosius to call a council, in which the Arians, if their doctrine were not declared orthodox, might at least obtain toleration. The mission was unsuccessful: Arianism was condemned, and Ulfilas probably died at Constantinople, at the age of seventy, in the year 381. The letter of Auxentius contains an extract from his will, or confession of faith. Ulfilas, we are told, was master of the three languages, Gothic, Greek, and Latin; and Latin was the legal and *documentary* language of the East as well as the West. We are not informed by Ulfilas what were his opinions respecting the person of Christ. This deficiency is supplied by Auxentius, from whom it appears that he held "that there is only one unborn (*ingenitus*) God, who, not in order to divide his own Deity, but to show forth his power and goodness, created the only born (*unigenitum*) Son, the second God, who has a higher God over him, God the Father. The whole creation is created by the Son, the Son himself created by the Father. Christ is neither equal nor similar to the Father: they are separate persons and have different wills. The Holy Spirit has not the title of God: he is created by the Father through the Son in the third degree, subordinate and obedient to the Father like the Son." "And so there is only one God."

Whatever may be thought of his opinions, Ulfilas showed at least his own confidence in them by enabling the Gothic nation to judge for themselves whether they were scriptural or not. All accounts agree in representing him as the means of introducing them to the knowledge of the Scriptures in their native tongue. And this involved another very important service,—furnishing them with an alphabet. In ascribing to him this latter

*At this time neither Arius not Athanasius had been born to fill the Church with disputes about the person of Christ, so the Goths had been spared the unhappy controversy.

invention, friends and enemies, the Arian Philostorgius and the orthodox Socrates agree. We are not to understand this as if he had devised a new set of characters for the use of his countrymen: it is evident from the comparison of the Mœso-Gothic with the Greek and Latin alphabets that he had adapted the characters of the latter to his native language. And this could be done, from the radical affinity of the three languages which modern philology has brought to light, without the difficulty which is experienced in expressing the sound of Oriental languages in Greek or Roman letters. His alphabet is not that which, under the name of Runic, was possessed by the Gothic tribes on the Baltic, and the origin of which is still a mystery.

By the events of the fifth century the Goths were widely scattered over Europe. The Visigoths, after a short occupation of Italy, established themselves in the south of Gaul and in Spain, being finally dispossessed of the former by the Franks and the latter by the Saracens. The Ostrogoths, towards the end of the century, established under Theodoric a short-lived monarchy in Northern and Central Italy. Wherever they went they carried with them, it is probable, not only the alphabet which they owed to Ulfilas, but his version of the Scriptures, as we know they did the Arian doctrine. Salvian, the bishop of Marseilles, in his "Treatise de Gubernatione Dei" (vii. 9–13), describes them as going to battle, carrying before them *librum divinæ legis, sacri voluminis scripta.* In the midst of their sanguinary ravages they showed themselves a "God-fearing people." Orosius, while he mourns over these ravages and considers them as a scourge of God, acknowledges that Rome suffered less from the Goths than it had done from Marius and Sulla, from Cæsar and Pompey, or Gaul and Spain from the conquest of the Romans. Their morals, too, were purer in many respects than those of the people whom they conquered.

With the disappearance of the Gothic monarchies in Italy, France, and Spain, we lose all trace of the version of Ulfilas, till, in the latter half of the sixteenth century, a MS. written on vellum, in silver letters with golden initials, was discovered in the Abbey of Werden, in Westphalia.

A comparison of the recovered version of Ulfilas with the Greek, which Massmann has printed, fully confirms the opinion that he translated from the Greek, and not from the Latin, a question once eagerly debated. Mill, finding that Ulfilas had many readings in common with the Codex Bezæ, which was then reputed to *Latinize,* was inclined to think that the Gothic version had been influenced by the Latin. There was, indeed, no reason why Ulfilas, who was master of the Latin as well as the Greek, should not have consulted Latin MSS., or why the Greek MSS. which he used should not have more or less affinity with the Latin; but that he translated from the Greek, not from the Latin, will, I think, be the conclusion of every one who compares his version with the Greek. It thus becomes a valuable aid to the critic towards ascertaining the reading of the Greek MSS. in the fourth century. His fidelity as a translator is unimpeachable.

It is said by Philostorgius that Ulfilas translated the whole of the Bible except the books of Kings, which contained the wars of the Jewish people, and which he feared would stimulate the propensities of the Gothic nation, already too prone to war. To have been consistent he should have also withheld from them the book of Joshua, which was quite as likely to be dangerous. Hitherto nothing has been found of the historical books subsequent to the Pentateuch, except a fragment of Ezra and a considerable portion of Nehemiah.

While Ulfilas was giving to his nation a treasure above all price in a translation of the Holy Scriptures, he was also bequeathing a most valuable legacy to all the branches of the Gothic family in this record of their primitive language. Without it it would have been impossible for Jacob Grimm to have traced the analogies which connect the various dialects which sprung from it, and demonstrated the original identity of the Scandinavian, Saxon, Anglo-Saxon, and Teutonic in its various branches. He is said to have been the author of many theological treatises which have perished, probably with no injury to his reputation, judging from the specimens which we have of the theology of that age. What time has spared is a sufficient title to our grateful remembrance.

IMPORTANT DATES REGARDING THE BIBLE.

About 950.—Aldred—interlinear Anglo-Saxon paraphrase of the Gospels (Lindisfarne Gospels).

970–1000.—Abbot Ælfric produced "the Durham Gospels," also an Anglo-Saxon version of the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, etc.

About 1215.—The Ormulum—metrical version of parts of the Gospels and the Acts.

About 1320.—Psalter in English prose, credited to William of Shoreham.
About 1340.—Rolle of Hampole translated the Psalter into English.
1380.—Wyclif's translation of the New Testament completed.
1382.—Wyclif's Bible with help of Nicholas of Hereford completed.
1388.—Purvey's harmonization of Wyclif and Hereford's work.
1454.—Printing from movable types invented.
1455.—First complete Bible—the Vulgate—printed.
(1503.—First Hebrew grammar published.)
(1506.—First Hebrew lexicon published.)
1516.—First Greek New Testament—Erasmus's—appeared.
1522.—Luther's New Testament in German.
1523.—Tyndale goes to London to translate the Bible.
1524.—Tyndale withdraws from London to Hamburg and Wittenberg.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, 45 Spring Lane, Canton, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

ENIGMA.

I am composed of 17 letters.
My 3, 15, 10, 2, is a part of a hospital.
My 12, 4, 16, 11, is a story.
My 3, 15, 13, 7, 5, is one of the necessaries of life.
My 14, 1, 4, 8, 11, is to throw.
My 6, 9, 17, 2, is an act.
My *whole* was a famous Unitarian minister and writer.

—*The Beacon.*

II.

SUGGESTIONS.

What famous persons do the following objects suggest?

1. A donkey.
2. A suit of black armor.
3. A handful of dates.
4. An uprooted tree.
5. Boots and saddles.

—*Youth's Companion.*

III.

TRANSPOSITIONS.

Familiar Wild Flowers.

1. Dolob Orto. 2. Maneoen. 3. Tilevo. 4. Subtel. 5. Wiroltvr. 6. Rawoyr. 7. Siwapesips. 8. Utbtre dnageog.

IV.

QUESTIONS IN HISTORY.

1. What Scotch hero compelled the English to recognize the independence of his native land in 1323?
2. What naval hero sailed the ocean blue in the times of Queen Bess and was knighted by her?
3. Who is the national hero of Spain?

V.

CHARADE.

My *first* a much-used vessel is,
Or means to have capacities;
My *second* is a heavy load,
And also the prevailing mode;
My *whole* you'll quickly understand,
If I send you off to Switzerland.

—*St. Nicholas.*

Answers to puzzles in the February number.

I. FEBRUARY ACROSTIC.—1. Anser. 2. Bates. 3. Raven. 4. Abaft. 5. Holly. 6. Alert. 7. Money. 8. Latin. 9. Icing. 10. Nancy. 11. Creek. 12. Older. 13. Loath. 14. Noyon. Initials, Abraham Lincoln. Third, St. Valentine Day.

II. CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.—Liliuokalani.

III. SOMETHING IN NAMES.—Washington. February. The Old Dominion. Father of his Country. Martha Dandridge. Mount Vernon.

IV. A DIAMOND.—

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V. SHAKESPEARE PUZZLE.—1. Portia. 2. Imogen. 3. Goneril. 4. Titania. 5. Isabel. 6. Beatrice.

In the answers given in the January number to the Numerical Puzzle in the December number the second one was given as William B. Frye, and it should have been William P. Frye.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of the *Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins, or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

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It is a rule of the Cheerful Letter Exchange that no one may ask for money, clothing, or other articles, except books and magazines.

The name of any person who fails to obey this rule will be dropped from our list. Any worker receiving such a request should send the letter at once to headquarters.

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